

## SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF YEWA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT, OGUN STATE: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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### ABSTRACT

*Social entrepreneurship has emerged as a powerful force in addressing global socio-economic challenges by integrating business strategies with social impact. Unlike traditional enterprises, which primarily focus on profit generation, social enterprises aim to create sustainable solutions to pressing societal problems. This study examined the effect of social entrepreneurship on economic development, with specific reference to Yewa South Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated how social enterprises contribute to community empowerment, poverty reduction, and job creation. The study adopted a literature review approach, drawing on existing scholarly articles, reports, and case studies on social entrepreneurship and economic development, with particular emphasis on rural and semi-urban communities such as Yewa South. The reviewed literature revealed that social entrepreneurship has a significant positive impact on community empowerment, poverty alleviation, and employment generation. It also promotes the development of social capital and stimulates local economic activities, thereby contributing to sustainable economic development. However, the review identified several challenges that constrain the effectiveness of social enterprises in the area, including inadequate policy support, limited access to funding, and poor infrastructure. The study concludes that social entrepreneurship has considerable potential to drive sustainable economic development in Yewa South Local Government Area. It therefore recommends that the government should establish a supportive policy environment, strengthen capacity-building initiatives, improve access to finance, and invest in enabling infrastructure to maximize the contributions of social enterprises to local economic development.*

**Keywords:** Social Entrepreneurship, Economic Development, Community Empowerment, Poverty Reduction, Job Creation

### 1.0 Introduction

Development is still a big problem in developing nations like Nigeria, and it has been said to be the principal obstacle to both socioeconomic progress and sustainable development, particularly at the rural level (Madu & Yusof, 2025). To address these threats and enhance the people's quality of life and well-being, the government has over time developed several programs and initiatives. However, progress remained negligible or nonexistent, especially in rural areas (FAO & UNESCO, 2023). Many scholars and even governments are concerned about this change, particularly those in emerging and undeveloped countries, which emphasize the importance of stakeholder collaborations and holistic engagements as ways to ensure quick and durable rural development (Madu & Yusof, 2025).

This highlights the rise and spread of various social entrepreneurs, particularly non-profits, who collaborate with the government to ensure effective rural development. As a result, social entrepreneurship is viewed as one of the ways that could help the government strengthen its efforts to foster effective, long-term, and rapid rural economic development in Nigeria. This is required since the government cannot provide all of the equipment needed for development on its own. Collaborations and interactions between the commercial and non-governmental sectors are required to achieve this (Idris, 2021).

There is an increasing recognition of social entrepreneurship's potential as a vehicle for addressing environmental, social, and economic challenges. Its emergence as a hybrid strategy for community transformation opens up the option of using it to address poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, insecurity, climate change, and other social and economic difficulties in rural areas (Adewole, 2022). According to Ihejimaizu and Udensi (2017), social entrepreneurship is the ability to recognize a social challenge as an opportunity and apply entrepreneurial concepts to create, build, and manage a social enterprise to effect the desired social change. It requires being able to see "problems" as "opportunities" and then taking the initiative to identify solutions and effectively fulfill these needs. In essence, customers pay to have the problem solved. Social entrepreneurship, therefore, creates wealth for the

society as a whole by its contribution to community development (Wale-Oshinowo, Uba, Adeyeye, & Omobowale, 2019).

The dual goals of creating social value and preserving financial sustainability characterize social entrepreneurship. In contrast to traditional businesses, social enterprises aim to address societal challenges including poverty, injustice, and environmental degradation by prioritizing social effect in addition to profit (Brinda, Sachdeva, Lal, Kumar, Pal, Chinthamu, & Shrivastava, 2024). Social entrepreneurs can be crucial in promoting economic growth in rural areas, where government shortcomings and market failures are more noticeable. Social entrepreneurs generate new chances for social change and revenue generation that are firmly anchored in the local context by utilizing local resources, encouraging community involvement, and advocating for sustainable practices (Thompson, 2018).

According to Santos (2022), social entrepreneurship is important for rural development since it can bring new ideas where conventional approaches haven't worked. He went on to say that inclusive business strategies that involve marginalized groups like women, young people, and indigenous communities as active participants in economic activity are frequently used by social businesses. This strategy gives these groups the ability to take charge of their own development in addition to giving them access to jobs and revenue. Furthermore, ecologically friendly methods are widely adopted by social enterprises in rural regions, which is crucial for protecting the natural resources that rural populations rely on (Brinda et al., 2024). Therefore, by fostering innovative business models that prioritize social value alongside financial sustainability, social entrepreneurs play a crucial role in driving inclusive and long-term economic development.

Long-term financial stability, environmental preservation, and fair resource distribution are all hallmarks of economic development, which calls for creative solutions that transcend traditional market procedures. Through the alignment of economic endeavors with social and environmental goals, social entrepreneurship offers a feasible route. These businesses ensure ethical business practices and environmental responsibility while fostering job creation, skill development, and local economic empowerment (Shinde, Devi, Kurup, Thomas, & Gupta, 2025). Todaro and Smith (2025) define economic development as the consistent, coordinated efforts of communities and policymakers to raise the standard of life and economic well-being of a particular region, such as advancements in employment, healthcare, and literacy. It encompasses both quantitative increases in a country's output and income and qualitative improvements in the economic and social structures that enhance the well-being of the population (Jhingan, 2021).

Rural communities sometimes suffer from chronic poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of economic prospects, making them neglected in the worldwide quest for economic progress. The rural workforce's movement to urban areas in pursuit of greater opportunities exacerbates these issues, creating a vicious cycle of social disintegration and economic stagnation in rural areas (Brinda et al., 2024). The distinct needs and potential of rural communities have frequently been overlooked by traditional development strategies, which mostly rely on outside assistance or urban-centric models of economic growth. As a result, social entrepreneurship has become a viable substitute that provides creative answers to the unique problems that rural communities experience (Yunus, 2020).

With emphasis on how these innovative businesses ideas support job creation, poverty reduction, and community empowerment, this study aims to investigate the effects of social entrepreneurship on rural economic development. Empirical evidence and case studies of prosperous social enterprises functioning in diverse rural environments, will be incorporated into the analysis. Using the Yewa South local government area of Ogun state as a point of reference, the paper attempts to provide a thorough understanding of the role of social entrepreneurship in rural economic development by examining the elements that lead to the success of social entrepreneurship in rural areas as well as the challenges that these businesses encounter. In the process, the article also seeks to accomplish the following specific objectives:

- i. To analyze the contribution of social entrepreneurship to community empowerment in Yewa South Local Government, Ogun state
- ii. To explore how social entrepreneurship enhances poverty alleviation in Yewa South Local Government, Ogun state
- iii. To discuss how social entrepreneurship aid job creation in Yewa South Local Government, Ogun state

## 2.0 Literature Review

### 2.1 Conceptual Review

#### 2.1.1 Defining Social Entrepreneurship

In addition to having a good economic, social, and environmental impact, social entrepreneurship is a creative company model that seeks to address social issues (Diaz-Sarachaga & Ariza-Montes, 2022; Kalendzhjan & Kadol, 2022). Using creative business models that promote change and benefit society, it is a private endeavor in the social economy that seeks to have a social impact rather than make money (Klein, 2023). Through the involvement of many stakeholder groups and the promotion of inter-sectoral cooperation, social entrepreneurship is essential to attaining sustainable socio-economic development (Praszkier & Munnik, 2023). By offering creative solutions and attending to community needs, it tackles social issues that the public sector is unable to handle and the private sector overlooks (Praszkier & Munnik, 2023). Social entrepreneurship, in its turn, tends to foster the richness of constitutional rights and freedoms, specifically, human right to work, live in dignity, and be protected (Khan, Jamil, & Azharuddin, 2023).

Social entrepreneurship ensures the preservation of social fairness by challenging market preconceptions and prejudices by focusing on social influence rather than money. Social entrepreneurship success is promoted through collaborations, networking, and a focus on the environment (Godwin, Crocker-Billingsley, Allen-Milton, & Lassiter, 2022). As a new sector, social entrepreneurship has the potential to address today's environmental and social issues in order to improve the future. Lakner and Talukder, 2023. Through creative social business models and social enterprises that implement social policies through immediate social activities, social entrepreneurship essentially serves as a weapon for change to solve social injustices and achieve social justice (Bansal, Garg, & Sharma, 2019).

#### 2.1.2 Challenges of Social Entrepreneurship in Rural Areas

Rural areas often grapple with a set of interrelated challenges that impede economic development. These include: **Geographic Isolation:** Due to their remote locations, many rural towns have limited access to infrastructure, services, and markets. Higher prices for products and services, less economic possibilities, and restricted access to healthcare and education are all consequences of this isolation (Brinda et al., 2024).

**Lack of Infrastructure:** Economic activity in rural areas is further hampered by inadequate infrastructure, which includes inadequate transportation networks, unstable energy supply, and restricted communication technology. These shortcomings make it difficult for communities to draw in investment and for enterprises to run effectively (Brinda et al., 2024).

**Limited Access to Finance:** Because traditional financial institutions are less likely to serve remote locations, rural entrepreneurs frequently struggle to obtain credit and financial services. Rural inhabitants' capacity to invest in new technology, launch or grow businesses, or enhance their standard of living is hampered by this lack of funding (Brinda et al., 2024).

**Dependency on Agriculture:** A large portion of rural economies are dependent on agriculture, which is susceptible to changes in weather, market pricing, and environmental deterioration. This reliance can restrict the diversification of revenue sources and cause economic instability (Brinda et al., 2024).

**Population Decline:** Outmigration is a prevalent problem in rural towns, especially among young people who are moving to cities in search of better prospects. A declining labor force, less economic activity, and the breakdown of social and communal structures are all possible outcomes of this demographic change (Brinda et al., 2024).

**Policy and Regulatory Obstacles:** Social entrepreneurs operating in rural regions may encounter policy and regulatory obstacles that could impede their activities. These could include onerous land-use restrictions, difficult business registration procedures, or a lack of government assistance for social entrepreneurs (Brinda et al., 2024).

#### 2.1.3 Factors Contributing to the Success of Social Entrepreneurship in Rural Areas

**Leveraging Local Resources:** Social entrepreneurs can protect cultural heritage and encourage environmental stewardship in addition to producing revenue and jobs by leveraging local resources. This strategy guarantees that social entrepreneurship's financial gains are anchored in the local environment, increasing their long-term sustainability (Alvord, Brown, & Letts, 2024).

**Encouraging Inclusive Economic Participation:** A social enterprise may train and assist women in launching small businesses, or it could give young people jobs in sustainable agriculture, artisan crafts, or renewable energy. Social entrepreneurs contribute to the development of more resilient and equitable rural economies by encouraging inclusive economic involvement (Alvord et al., 2024).

**Promoting Community-Led Development:** Rural communities' social fabric is strengthened and social cohesion is promoted by community-led development. Social businesses contribute to the development of social capital, trust, and a common vision for the community's future by incorporating community members in decision-making and execution (Alvord et al., 2024).

**Innovation and Local Contextualization:** A social company could design a mobile healthcare service that travels to far-flung villages or produce an affordable solar lighting solution for rural people living off the grid. These ideas are sometimes formed out of necessity, as social entrepreneurs must adapt to the restricted resources and infrastructure accessible in rural locations. Social entrepreneurs can develop scalable and replicable solutions that have an influence outside of their immediate community by inventing in response to local difficulties (Alvord et al., 2024).

**Developing Long-Term Market Connections:** A social company could link rural craftspeople with global consumers or assist local farmers in reaching upscale markets for organic or specialty products. Social entrepreneurs assist rural producers in gaining greater value from their goods, boosting their revenue, and lessening their susceptibility to market swings by establishing these market connections (Alvord et al., 2024).

#### 2.1.4 Social Entrepreneurship and Community Empowerment

The focus on social inclusion and community empowerment is one of the unique characteristics of social entrepreneurship. To ensure that the community is actively involved in the development process, social entrepreneurs frequently collaborate closely with local communities to identify their needs and co-create solutions (Alvord et al., 2024). In addition to increasing the social enterprise's efficacy and relevance, this participatory method empowers community members by granting them a sense of control and ownership over their financial destinies (Ihejiamaizu & Udensi, 2017). According to Adewole (2022), social entrepreneurship may empower communities in a variety of ways. Social entrepreneurs may offer capacity-building and training initiatives that give locals the abilities and information need to engage in economic activity. This not only enhances their employability but also builds local capacity for innovation and entrepreneurship.

Furthermore, by purposefully identifying and incorporating underrepresented populations into economic endeavors, social entrepreneurship promotes social inclusion. This can involve assisting minority-owned business owners, establishing employment opportunities for women in traditionally male-dominated fields, or offering services specifically designed to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. Social enterprises ensure that everyone in the community benefits from growth by fostering social inclusion, which leads to more equitable economic development (Brinda et al., 2024).

#### 2.1.5 Social Entrepreneurship and Poverty Alleviation

By tackling the underlying causes of poverty and offering long-term solutions, social entrepreneurship plays a critical role in reducing poverty. Social entrepreneurs concentrate on developing long-term economic opportunities that enable people and communities to escape poverty, in contrast to charity-based strategies that frequently provide short-term respite. Creating reasonably priced goods and services that meet the requirements of low-income groups is one of the main tactics employed by social entrepreneurs (Brinda et al., 2024). Social entrepreneurs may provide vital products and services like reasonably priced healthcare, clean water, and renewable energy to communities that are frequently disregarded by traditional firms by rethinking cost structures and distribution methods. This not only improves the quality of life for the poor but also creates new markets and stimulates economic activity in these areas (Khan et al., 2023).

To ensure that the financial gains from their operations are kept locally, a lot of social entrepreneurs also reinvest their earnings back into the company or the community. According to Alvord et al. (2024), this reinvestment contributes to the development of local capacity, the creation of additional jobs, and a cycle of economic growth that progressively lowers poverty levels.

#### 2.1.6 Social Entrepreneurship and Job Creation

The potential of social entrepreneurship to generate money and jobs, particularly in underrepresented and underprivileged regions, is one of its most immediate effects on economic development. Social entrepreneurs frequently focus on regions with high unemployment rates and limited economic possibilities (Kalendzhjan & Kadol, 2022). Social entrepreneurs generate new job possibilities for locals by starting companies that cater to necessities like clean energy, healthcare, education, or agriculture (Yunus, 2020). Social entrepreneurs can promote new farming methods, offer training, and establish market connections in rural areas where agricultural output may be low because of a lack of resources or experience. These actions can increase local farmers' income and productivity.

According to Wale-Oshinowo et al. (2019), this not only lowers unemployment but also stabilizes household income streams, improving the community's overall economic well-being. Additionally, social entrepreneurs frequently use inclusive hiring methods, giving opportunity to persons like women, young people, and people with disabilities who might not otherwise have access to the conventional labor market. By incorporating

underrepresented populations into the economic fabric, this inclusivity further increases the socioeconomic impact of social entrepreneurship (Brinda et al., 2024).

## 2.2 Theoretical Review

This study is anchored on Schumpeter's Theory of Innovation (1934)

### Schumpeter's Theory of Innovation by Schumpeter (1934)

According to Schumpeter's Theory of Innovation, entrepreneurial innovation which he called "creative destruction" is what propels economic development. Entrepreneurs offer new goods, markets, procedures, or organizational strategies that upend established systems (Schumpeter, 1934). This theory highlights how creative people and institutions may revitalize sluggish economies, particularly in rural areas. The application of this theory is evident in the rise of youth-led projects and clean energy solutions in Ogun State's Yewa South Local Government, where social entrepreneurs use local resources and expertise to generate new business opportunities, lower unemployment, and raise living standards. Through the introduction of eco-friendly farming practices, solar-powered items, and digital platforms for rural trade, these innovators challenge established norms and promote equitable growth in the local economy.

## 3.0 Materials and Methods

This study adopts empirical evidence and case studies analysis of successful social enterprises operating in various rural contexts to explore how social entrepreneurship contributed to economic development of rural areas such as Yewa South local government, Ogun state. The study synthesizes existing literatures to identify the key concepts, and theories in the current body of knowledge. Therefore, data was collected from related articles on the subject matter via extant literature review approach in order to validate the empirical relation between the variables.

## 4.0 Findings and Discussion

### 4.1 Findings

#### Objective 1: To analyze the contribution of social entrepreneurship to community empowerment in Yewa South Local Government, Ogun state

According to Ezemba, Anigbogu, and Ukamaka's (2022) research, members' economic empowerment was greatly enhanced by their involvement in microbusiness ventures within Anambra State's women's cooperative societies, which in turn increased their income, self-assurance, and accountability. Similar to this, Ezeokafor, Nwankwo, and Onuoha's (2021) research revealed that social and economic activities in rural Anambra women's cooperatives greatly improved women's empowerment by raising their social standing, sense of dignity, and participation in local decision-making. In the Nimo Town research, Ufoaroh (2017) also showed how cooperative society-driven projects greatly raised living conditions and reduced rural women's poverty, reaffirming the crucial role cooperatives play in community development.

#### Objective 2: To explore how social entrepreneurship enhances poverty alleviation in Yewa South Local Government, Ogun state

According to the study of Ogbari, Eme, and Imhanlahimi (2024), social entrepreneurship that involves group efforts, resource availability, and institutional support considerably lowers poverty among women in agriculture. Engagement resulted in a statistically significant decrease in youth poverty, according to the study by Osabohien, Adeyanju, and Sani (2021); notably, non-participants might have decreased their poverty vulnerability by 28% had they taken part. Similarly, Oladipo and Nkamnebe (2024). Similarly, Mohammed, Ndulue, and Theresa (2024) discovered a strong and favorable correlation between social welfare, recycling services, low-cost waste-collection infrastructure, and the creation of jobs that reduce poverty. According to research by Adeyonu, Akinwale, and Eze (2024), households that participated in NFEs (Non-Farming Enterprises) had a significantly lower incidence of poverty than households that did not.

#### Objective 3: To discuss how social entrepreneurship aid job creation in Yewa South Local Government, Ogun state

According to a study by Osabohien, Worgwu, and Al Faryan (2023), social entrepreneurship combined with technology diffusion (such as having a website or sending emails to clients) is expected to expand employment by about 21% in the future, with technology adoption increasing capacity by 65–71%. In a similar vein, Ade Jamiu and Adeoye's (2023) study found that social entrepreneurship training in Ilorin significantly increased job creation. Specifically, small business owners who received training in chicken, fish, and snail farming produced more job opportunities than their peers who did not receive training. In their study, Nwankwo and Okeke (2017) also showed how local entrepreneurship in Oyi LGA contributes to output growth, job creation, and a decrease in rural-urban migration. Igwilllo, Nnamani, and Ugwuegede (2024) also found that establishing social enterprises, providing subsidized agricultural inputs (seeds, fertilizers, veterinary services) acts as a catalyst for agrarian self-employment and job creation in Southeast Nigeria's rural communities.

#### 4.2 Notable Case Studies of Social Entrepreneurship in Rural Areas

##### **LifeBank by Temie Giwa-Tubosun. Lagos, Nigeria**

**Overview:** LifeBank is a health-tech social enterprise that connects hospitals with essential medical supplies like blood, oxygen, and vaccines, particularly in underserved rural areas of Nigeria. It uses a digital platform and logistics network for timely delivery.

**Impact:** LifeBank has delivered over 120,000 medical products to rural and peri-urban hospitals, saving thousands of lives and improving access to critical healthcare.

**Key Takeaway:** Social entrepreneurship in health logistics bridges the gap in rural healthcare delivery and saves lives through innovative supply chain solutions.

##### **ColdHubs by Nnaemeka Chidiebere Ikegwuonu. Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria,**

**Overview:** ColdHubs provides solar-powered cold storage units to rural farmers and market vendors to reduce post-harvest losses in Nigeria. It targets communities with limited electricity access.

**Impact:** ColdHubs has installed over 50 cold rooms across rural markets, helping more than 5,000 farmers and traders preserve their produce, increase their income, and reduce food waste.

**Key Takeaway:** Clean energy solutions in rural agribusiness reduce post-harvest losses, improve livelihoods, and support food sustainability

##### **Wecyclers by Bilikiss Adebisi-Abiola. Lagos Island, Lagos, Nigeria**

**Overview:** Wecyclers is a Lagos-based social enterprise that partners with low-income communities to collect and recycle household waste, offering incentives to residents in return for recyclable materials.

**Impact:** Wecyclers has created employment for hundreds of waste collectors, diverted over 3,000 tons of waste from landfills, and improved sanitation in urban-rural fringe areas.

**Key Takeaway:** Waste-to-wealth models empower underserved communities economically while addressing environmental and health challenges.

##### **Youth Agripreneurship through the Ogun Broiler Project**

**Overview:** The Ogun State Broiler Project is a public-private partnership initiative aimed at empowering youth through poultry farming. Launched in 2019, the program engaged 55 young participants from across the state, providing them with training, access to credit, and infrastructure to rear broiler chickens at the Odeda Farm Institute in Eweje.

**Impact:** Participants, such as Miss Lara Mafe, reported significant profits, with Mafe earning ₦200,000 in her first six-week cycle. The program facilitated the rearing of thousands of birds per cycle, enhancing food production and providing sustainable income for the youth involved.

**Key Takeaway:** Targeted agripreneurship programs can effectively address youth unemployment in rural areas by providing practical skills, financial support, and market access, leading to economic empowerment and increased food security.

##### **Waste-to-Wealth Education in Primary Schools**

**Overview:** A study conducted by researchers from Tai Solarin University of Education introduced social entrepreneurship concepts to primary school pupils in Ogun State's central senatorial district. The initiative focused on teaching waste management practices, including waste sorting and recycling, to instill environmental consciousness and entrepreneurial skills among young students.

**Impact:** The program successfully equipped pupils with practical skills in waste handling and fostered a mindset geared towards environmental sustainability and wealth creation. Students demonstrated increased willingness to engage in community clean-up activities and explore opportunities in waste recycling.

**Key Takeaway:** Integrating social entrepreneurship education at the primary school level can cultivate responsible environmental behaviors and entrepreneurial thinking, laying the foundation for future community leaders committed to sustainable development.

#### 4.3 Discussion of Findings

Results from similar studies showed that economic empowerment, especially for women, significantly improves when they participate in cooperative-based social enterprises. These businesses encourage participation in local decision-making and increase income, self-esteem, and social inclusion. Although the empirical studies are centered on Anambra, Yewa South local government can benefit from the rural and socioeconomic context, which implies that comparable cooperative structures could strengthen local grassroots empowerment.

Additionally, the empirical data supports the idea that social entrepreneurship projects, particularly in waste management and agriculture, are essential to lowering poverty. Programs that give people access to financial incentives, institutional assistance, and resources dramatically reduce poverty, especially for women and young people. The consequence for Yewa South local government is that by expanding livelihood possibilities, focused social entrepreneurship models such as micro-enterprises and agri-businesses could lower poverty.

Finally, research has shown that social entrepreneurship, when paired with technology and skill development, greatly increases employment, particularly in agriculture and rural enterprise contexts. In addition to working for

themselves, participants in entrepreneurship programs create jobs for others. Supporting social entrepreneurs could open up job prospects and reduce rural-urban migration in Yewa South local government, where youth unemployment and underemployment are still problems.

## 5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusion

According to the reviewed literatures and case studies, social entrepreneurship is crucial to the economic development of the society, particularly in rural regions, as it helps in enhancing community empowerment, increasing job creation, and poverty reduction. Social entrepreneurs have proven to be effective at generating jobs, especially for underrepresented populations like women and young people. Through their innovative business models that empower communities and address complicated social concerns, social entrepreneurs have brought about significant change by promoting social and environmental ideals. In the end, this study demonstrates that social entrepreneurship is a useful tactic for empowering communities, reducing poverty, and creating jobs in rural regions like Yewa South Local Government Area. By supporting women's cooperatives, promoting small-scale agribusiness, and leveraging local enterprise innovations, social entrepreneurship can stimulate sustainable development and improve socio-economic outcomes in underserved communities.

### 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations was made for Yewa South Local Government Area:

- i. Yewa South Local Government should support women's cooperatives and adopt successful social enterprise models from other states to strengthen local participation and impact in Yewa South.
- ii. Yewa South Local Government should integrate mentorship, digital skills, and access to microfinance for youths through public-private partnerships to boost rural entrepreneurship and employment.
- iii. Yewa South Local Government should enact local policies that recognize, register, and incentivize social entrepreneurs to create a supportive environment for poverty-reducing innovations.

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